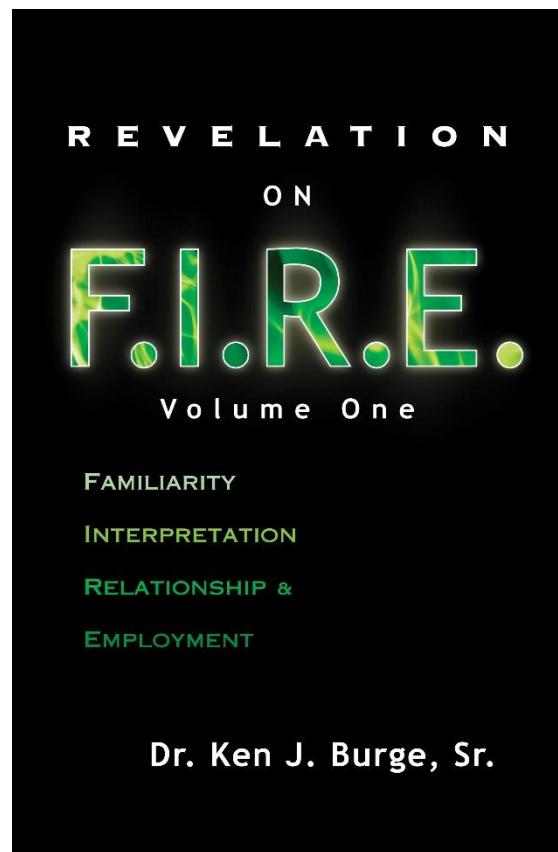


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REVELATION on F.I.R.E.

A Two-Volume Series

Dr. Ken J. Burge, Sr.



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About the Author

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Ken and his wife, Kimberly, have three adult sons.

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What Others are Saying About REVELATION on F.I.R.E.

(Two-Volume Series)

The book of Revelation has intimidated many, and Dr. Burge's book may just bring back some to reading, studying, and experiencing the blessings promised by Revelation (Rev. 1:3). It's a commentary with a twist, using a simple but useful acronym, F.I.R.E., which serves as the lens through which the reader looks.

Moving through the text of Revelation, Dr. Burge breaks the study into each element of the F.I.R.E. mnemonic. Particularly appealing is how each section begins with questions requiring the reader to personally interact with the Revelation text. The questions are simple and can be answered from the verses cited. I believe this is an effective way to prepare the reader to unpack the meaning of the verses being studied.

Dr. Burge's explanations of the text are simple and clear, noting important elements of the Greek grammar; his writing is engaging and easy to understand; the layout is easy to follow. It's my privilege to recommend it highly for the everyday man and woman sitting in church.

Rev. Christopher Bauer
Senior Pastor
Santa Rosa Bible Church
Santa Rosa, California

*The book of Revelation has been interpreted in some rather interesting ways over the course of the last two hundred years. In 1854, for instance, S.D. Baldwin published his work entitled *Armageddon; or the Overthrow of Romanism and Monarchy*. In this work, Baldwin presented some rather novel interpretations of Revelation, arguing that the forty-two months referred to in chapter eleven stood for the exact length of days between June of 335 and July 4, 1776, and that the child born in chapter twelve represented the government of the United States, which was to overthrow monarchy, as symbolized by the beast. The Book of Revelation, as interpreted by Baldwin, told the story of the United States and its overthrow of monarchy and the dragon of Great Britain. Of course, individuals can look back today and smile at interpretations such as these, but they underscore a somewhat significant point: many odd or idiosyncratic interpretations of Revelation exist and are still published on a somewhat regular basis. Fortunately, Dr. Burge's *Revelation on F.I.R.E.* is not such a book, as it relies on exemplary exegesis to interpret a most challenging text.*

What also sets this work apart is the way Dr. Burge manages to offer practical, biblical advice that the ordinary Christian can utilize in their everyday walk. And this is guidance drawn straight from the text. While many writers get caught up in offering up their own pet theories as to how the events of the End Times will play out, Dr. Burge sticks to the text and challenges the reader to grow in their walk with God.

*In a clear and effective style, Dr. Burge has managed to combine the erudition of a biblical commentary with the practical application only a pastor can provide. I highly recommend *Revelation on F.I.R.E.* for those interested in gaining a greater understanding of Revelation and who want to use that understanding to further their walk with Christ.*

Daniel Burge
Doctoral Candidate in History at the University of Alabama

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Suggested Interview Questions

For Dr. Ken J. Burge, Sr., author of *Revelation on F.I.R.E.*

(A Two-Volume Series)

1. Tell us a little about how and where you first came to Christ.

My best friend and I went to William Wirt Junior High School. My schoolmate was attending Colmar Manor Bible Church. He informed me that the Bible was taught and preached at all the services, which was something I had never experienced in the religion that I was raised. The pastor was preaching through the Book of Romans, so I decided to read through the Bible for myself to see if his preaching was true to the Word of God. My family thought it a bit odd when I started reading the family Bible from cover to cover. The confluence of the Word of God and the conviction of the Holy Spirit revealed that I was a sinner in need of a Savior. I put my faith in Jesus' finished work and was born again. By the way, the Colmar Manor Bible Church is where I have pastored for the last 25 years and have been attending faithfully for nearly 40 years.

2. What compelled you to continue to pastor the same church for 25 years even when the ethnic-mix of the community vastly changed, ultimately leading you to write the article, *The Need for Loyal Servants in Diverse Communities*?

When I began attending Colmar Manor Bible Church nearly 40 years ago the town of Colmar Manor was predominantly Caucasian. Approximately 15 years ago, when I had been Senior Pastor for 10 years, I started asking myself if I should stay pastoring the church since the flavor of the community was changing and our church wasn't representative of the ethnic diversity in the town. I seriously asked myself, and the Lord, "Am I the right man for this ministry?" Shortly thereafter I had the privilege to lead the town's mayor and her husband to Jesus. I then began a Bible study with this African American couple. One night I was in my church office and was asked to come outside immediately because the Mayor was requesting my presence. As I walked outside she was mediating a gang dispute in the middle of the street. I joined her and a couple of hours later the two groups disbanded. Word of this white pastor's loyalty to the town's black mayor must have permeated the community because from that time onward the church reflects the ethnic diversity of the town.

3. How did God supernaturally provide a house for you, which later benefited your church also?

I grew up in the small town of Riverdale Park in Maryland just several miles away from Washington, D.C. There was an elderly gentleman who lived two doors down from my house. He was a recluse and trusted few people. His home fell into disrepair since the death of his wife in 1961, which is the year that I was born. For some reason this man trusted me and would have me run errands for him. Moreover, he suffered from psychomotor seizures, which meant that he lost control of his mental faculties at times. I remember on several occasions not seeing him

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for a period of time, so I would go into his house and find that he was suffering from a seizure, and would call for an ambulance for him. I never gave it much thought but I guess it saved his life a couple of times. As the years moved on I got married but still regularly helped this senior citizen. Having said that, from the time that I was eighteen I had begun praying that God would provide a house for me. My desire was for the Lord to make a supernatural provision so that I could keep my current job with the telephone company. Although it wasn't a high paying job, it gave me a thirty-seven hour workweek, which would enable me to continue to serve as our church's youth pastor. One day God graciously turned the light on for me. He had directed me to talk to my former neighbor about my wife and I moving in with him—after we did major home repair—and to purchase the house from him. My bride was a registered nurse and we knew that buying an inexpensive home would benefit us while my wife could provide adequate care to help this gentleman live his sunset years being well cared for. I'll never forget the day that I made the trip to see my old friend and share my proposition with him. He looked at me and said, "Kenny, you and Kim move in with me and I'll give you the house." Shortly thereafter I would be a twenty-two year old man born in 1961 with a home that was paid off in 1941! By the way, our church always had serious water issues. When I became the pastor we sold the parsonage because I owned my own home and made the costly repairs to the church.

4. How did God use the call on your son's life to help sustain your own call to ministry through an especially rough season?

The statistics are discouraging pertaining to the small percentage of men that begin ministry and actually one day retire from the gospel ministry. I've read that nineteen out of twenty of the men that attended seminary in my generation will eventually leave the ministry. For those of us still in ministry, we have had our challenging times that have made us want to imitate Snagglepuss (the Hanna-Barbera cartoon pink mountain lion) and practice his famous saying, "Exit stage left." It was during one of those periods for me, which some would call the dark night of the soul, that God not only sustained me but called my youngest son into the ministry. Today Rev. Kenny Burge, Jr. is my Associate Pastor. I'm thankful for the staying power of grace.

5. How is God using your books to fulfill the motto of your church?

The Colmar Manor Bible Church's motto is as follows: Finding the lost, training the found, for God's glory. For my doctoral studies at Dallas Theological Seminary I focused upon homiletics (preaching). I continued my studies on this topic that led to the writing of Preaching with F.I.R.E.'s E.T.A. The book focuses upon training pastors how to develop and deliver biblical messages. Subsequently, I started writing a series of commentaries to help both pastor and parishioner alike to accurately interpret and employ the message of the Bible. These tools are designed to help Christians. However, I've come to see my F.I.R.E. series as an evangelistic tool. The Lord impressed upon me to distribute several of my books to those who don't know the Lord, but have an interest in studying the Bible. Although I never envisioned this series to be evangelistic, I've come to see that the F.I.R.E. series fulfills the church's motto to find the lost, train the found, for God's glory.

6. How do you envision the F.I.R.E. series benefiting both pastor and parishioner?

I've had the privilege to earn five degrees, all of which pertain to biblical studies. Our gracious heavenly Father directed me to focus upon hermeneutics, which is the fancy name for the principles to interpret the Bible. The F.I.R.E. acronym, which means familiarity, interpretation, relationship, and employment, is a proven means to get intimately acquainted with the living biblical text, interpret it accurately, relate it to its immediate and broader contexts, and then to employ its message. This information provided in the series gives pastors helpful analysis of

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the book being studied while helping them to communicate to their congregations how to apply what they've learned. Those not in the ministry will become much better acquainted with the Bible and learn what God expects them to do based upon what they have gleaned from the eternal Word of God.

7. Why will you choose your accommodations much more carefully the next time you go to minister in Honduras?

It has been my privilege to minister twice in Honduras. After we had finished our ministry and stay with our precious missionary friends, Andy and Carmen Castillo, we needed to head back to the airport in San Pedro Sula. Getting to the airport would require an overnight stay in a hotel. A relative had informed Andy that there was an inexpensive hostel by the airport where we could stay overnight. Let me describe our experience as written in Revelation on F.I.R.E: My pastor senses started tingling the moment we entered the lobby of the hostel. It felt like all the riffraff in Honduras were assembled in the foyer. As Andy talked with the clerk, who looked like a barkeep in a Humphrey Bogart movie, I immediately knew that I wasn't going to get any sleep because I'd be watching the door, since everyone in the joint could tell that I was the visiting gringo. As we made our way to our room, or at least what they billed as a room, there were multiple men staring at us—or, I should say, sizing us up—as we dragged our luggage up the steps. One of the men was about 6'4". Upon entering the room, the décor was even worse than I imagined. If I had to assess the time period the room represented, the late crud era comes to mind. I quickly explained to my wife Kim and to Kenny that I was going to slide a large dresser in front of the door for our safety. The instant I shoved it against the door, a brigade of roaches scurried for cover. I told Kim and Kenny to get some sleep. Thankfully our stay in the hostel from hades didn't last long. Through God's grace and protection, Andy wandered through the downstairs kitchen and overheard a conversation by the welcome wagon men who had previously given us the evil eye; it turned out that they were planning on mugging us and taking our passports. We all checked out rapidly and nervously awaited for a worker to unlock the gate, which kept our vehicle from leaving the premises. I praise God that we left unscathed, although I felt a large cluster of blondish red hair turning gray.

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